

Medical Economics and Public Health

Stanford Popular Medical Lectures—The forty-fourth course of these lectures will be given at Lane Hall, north side of Sacramento street, near Webster, San Francisco, on alternate Friday evenings at 8 o'clock, beginning January 8, when H. K. Faber will discuss "Dietary Peculiarities of Children," to be followed:

January 22, by H. E. Alderson on "Skin Disturbances From Foods and Drugs"; February 5, Hans Lissner on "Ductless Glands and Obesity"; February 19, P. K. Brown on "Gastro-intestinal Disturbances and Nutrition"; March 5, E. G. Martin on "Fatigue and Rest"; March 19, G. E. Ebright on "On the Prevention of Disease."

Doctors and their organizations are everywhere much interested in the problem of making the simple facts about health available to those who care to have them, so why not attend these lectures and invite your clientele to attend them, and support popular medical lectures given, as they always should be given, under medical supervision?

The abuse of medical charity is increasing. Thousands of well-paid and prosperous patients crowd the clinics, and some of them go there with the idea that they are getting a superior kind of treatment, but most of them go there because they can get something for nothing and they can save money that should go to private practitioners of medicine. Once they have tasted the benefits of medical charity, so freely bestowed by the clinic operated and controlled by state, city, public health and social hygiene services, it is easy to expect that kind of service always, and from everywhere they apply. Those who accept medical charity soon lose their self-respect, and if they do not become actual dependents they add to the burdens of the enterprises that are kept up by taxation.—Editorial, Journal Indiana Medical Association.

The individual general practitioners constitute by far the largest group of doctors; perhaps 75 per cent of all. Except in emergencies the great mass of the population look to the general practitioner. When the word "doctor" is mentioned, it is he who comes to the mind of the average citizen.—President Vincent of the Rockefeller Foundation, Ohio Medical Journal.

"Doctor" John Scott Barker must serve five years in the penitentiary. Barker was convicted about a year and a half ago of violation of the Federal Narcotic law in connection with the operation of "narcotic cure" hospitals.

Twenty thousand infant deaths, 40,000 abortions, and 80,000 deaths among adults is the toll exacted by syphilis in France each year, according to the Minister of Labor, Hygiene and Social Welfare.—The Lancet (London).

Why patronize itinerant microscope fixers when reliable firms are advertisers in your magazine?

Only a reliable expert should undertake to recondition a good microscope. Those who have not yet learned their lesson might see something of interest in this note.

Physicians always have and always will render much free service. That is humanitarian. That is professional duty. They always have, and always will lead the way in public health movements, even to their sacrifice and personal detriment. That, too, is proper. But should it also be their duty, at additional financial sacrifice, to advertise public health and scientific medicine to the public? Probably they should in some manner. One wise teacher and observer has declared that physicians overlook many opportunities for "health education" in their contact with their patients. Could not such splendid opportunity be utilized to advantage?—Ohio Med. Jour.

The mass of the population (perhaps 75 to 80 per cent) are treated by general practitioners who have limited technical appliances, little or no specialization of skill and slight relation to medical services organized in hospitals, dispensaries, and clinics. The rich and well-to-do (perhaps 5 per cent) receive attention from spe-

cialists who depend primarily upon their own individual equipment, who have little connection with institutional medicine, but provide a high degree of specialized skill. The poor (perhaps 15 to 20 per cent) are under the charge of organized practice, that is, doctors who have access to institutional equipment, offer a high degree of specialization, and are fairly well connected with hospital, dispensary and health center services.—President Vincent of the Rockefeller Foundation, Ohio Med. Jour.

Bootlegging in the sphere of reproduction is practiced by people on a larger scale than it would be were there no such laws on the statute books. What would have been moderately practiced is now immoderately resorted to, with the result that the birth rate is tumbling among many groups. And it seems to be true that the same class of people who formerly used little or no alcohol as a beverage, but who now are pretty good drinkers, are the same people who are practicing birth control most intensively. We have in mind the better type of citizens who, for psychological and traditional reasons, are unamenable to oppressive laws and are inevitably bound to circumvent them and ultimately to defeat them.—Editorial, New York Medical Times.

Are we approaching the time when what we wish to do we must first prohibit—preferably by an amendment to the Constitution?

Some Influences of Air Pressure Upon Health—Newspapers recently made a first-page story about certain fish that exploded when brought rapidly to the surface from their normal habitat in the depths of the ocean.

Physicians in the tropics recognize altitude disease or hill diarrhea as being produced by sudden changes in air density. Altitude or rarefied air disease also is an authenticated trouble among aeroplane operators, and similar disturbances have been recognized as mountain sickness for untold centuries. Compressed-air troubles or caisson disease, as it was once known, is also of increasing prevalence, due to changing industrial conditions. It was found that workers in the steel caissons used in pushing the tunnels under the river at New York had to be removed from the high pressure under which they worked in the caissons to normal air by slow, easy stages, in chambers of gradually reducing air pressure, otherwise their joints puffed up like air balloons, the pain was terrific, and other troubles ensued.

The influence of air density upon health is a subject of growing importance. Worthwhile literature is being published and a rather extensive literature is already available to those who care to look in out-of-the-way places for it. However—and this is the point of this note—conservative physicians will be cautious in applying plausible theories and in utilizing theoretical possibilities about the influences of air pressure in the treatment of human beings. Above all, investigate before investing money in schemes calculated to make money and serve the public by utilizing air density in unproved fields.

Hollywood Hospital—In this and subsequent issues of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE a dignified announcement of the Hollywood Hospital will be found in the advertising pages. This splendid type of hospital is one of a growing number that have been promoted and developed by forward-looking citizens in various centers throughout this state. Prominent physicians of the Hollywood section of Southern California and prominent non-medical citizens have pooled their interests and are expressing modern health service through this fine institution, which is fully accredited by our state and national accrediting bodies.

Those who constantly consult the physicians' directory will find several new names added this month. H. J. Templeton has recently opened offices in Oakland, and is limiting his practice to dermatology and syphilology. Thomas E. Gibson has opened offices in the Flood building, San Francisco, and will limit his practice to urology; while Thomas J. Clark and F. H. Stibbens, Oakland, limit their practice to dermatology, syphilology, and genito-urinary diseases.

Ford Hospital has created a mild sensation in medical circles by throwing away its price list for human

repairs and parts. The Ford staff has been officially informed that the flat-rate system of charging for the treatment of human ailments has been abandoned and that "the patient's charges will be on an income basis," which is the customary method of the medical profession as a whole in making charges.—Ohio State Medical Journal.

Why Mr. Ford has abolished the fee system on which he has operated for ten years is not publicly stated; but the fact is that, besides the millions he has put into his hospital, he has had to make up a deficit of \$2,400,000 in that period. It is a reasonable assumption that, by charging his patients according to their income, he expects to get more business from people who could not afford to pay his fixed fees and to reduce his annual deficit. Mr. Ford's experience seems like a fair vindication of the ancient fee system of the medical profession.—Detroit Saturday Night.

The State Controller concludes that \$10,000,000 of tax money was spent in official charity last year.

Quite a tidy sum, but less than was spent through "voluntary" organizations. Both together is less than was contributed by individuals privately.

Charity as a government function and as Big Business is growing by leaps and bounds, but at the same time it is losing its savor, without which its future may be predicted with certainty.

Comfortable Chairs for Convalescents—Sonnenschein Brothers' advertisement of a chair to meet this very important need in serving the sick is carried in this and subsequent issues of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE. This chair may not satisfy everyone, but it is receiving commendatory endorsement from several of our California hospitals. We commend its consideration to doctors who consider the comfort of their patients as contributing to successful treatment.

According to official figures, California counties spent over one and a quarter million of dollars for sheriffs' expenses; over half a million more for constables and over five millions for courts.

They spent less than one-third of a million for health.

Who wouldn't rather be a peace officer with a pull than a health doctor for ten dollars a month?

According to "official figures" recently featured in the public press:

Influenza killed 604 Californians last year. Motor cars beat the influenza bacillus all hollow by killing 1254.

Scarlet fever only completely destroyed 106 (all children), but murderers got 374.

Cancer caught up with 5120 of our people. Automobiles, railroads, machinery, assassins' bullets got 2211.

Altogether, the death rate of 1452 per hundred thousand was eighteen points higher than it was the year before.

The most interesting feature of these statistics is that the death rate from causes that everyone can see and understand increased more sharply than in those diseases of more obscure causes.

If it is more "health education" our people need, what about applying it to possible victims of motor cars? It is easier to avoid motor cars even on Market street, San Francisco, or Broadway, Los Angeles, than it is to avoid influenza germs or cancer.

Niles Home for the Aged—Many doctors undoubtedly will be glad to see the dignified statement of the Niles Home for the Aged, which will appear hereafter in the advertising pages of this magazine. It is a sign of better times and an advance toward things as they ought to be when institutions designed to conserve health and to care for the aged realize the value of holding an accredited standing before medical organizations.

Spring water will be delivered to your office or home by the Purity Spring Water Company, whose announcement begins this month in our advertising pages, and will continue throughout the year. We are glad to add their name to our list of advertisers handling good water and marketing it in an ethical manner.

In his propaganda for the laudable purpose of arousing the citizens of Orange County to the importance of having all children immunized against smallpox and diphtheria, the county public health doctor says: "*There is absolutely no harm in these vaccines. They are thoroughly sterilized before using, and there are no live germs in them.*" (Italics ours.)

This statement has called forth protests from non-medical citizens and from physicians. The former ask the Better Health Service if they are compelled to patronize these tax-supported free clinics instead of their family doctors. Some of them ask why the family doctor is incompetent to render this service if it is as "simple and harmless as the clinic doctor claims." Physicians protest against the inaccuracy of the quoted statement, claiming that the unreliable assertion that smallpox vaccine "is thoroughly sterilized before using" is potentially harmful when uttered by doctors who know better.

THE WOMEN PHYSICIANS' CLUB OF SAN FRANCISCO was organized at a dinner held at the Bellevue Hotel, December 11, 1925.

All women physicians of San Francisco who hold an M.D. degree and who are licensed to practice medicine by the State Board of Medical Examiners of California were invited to take part.

There are 152 women in San Francisco who are eligible for membership; of this number 90 responded, 12 are out of the state, 3 were not located, leaving 47 unheard from.

The meeting was attended by 69 women physicians. Following the dinner, the necessary steps were taken for forming a permanent organization.

Dr. Adelaide Brown presided, and called upon Dr. Anna MacRae, who, with Dr. Agnes Walker, took charge of the arrangements, to call the roll of those present, asking each member as her name was called to rise, repeat her name and give her college; to this was added, in the spirit of fun, her year. This brought about much applause, particularly as all parts of the United States were represented, as well as Russia, Siberia, and Paris.

The years, beginning with Dr. Lucy Wauzer (1876), and Dr. Emma Merritt (1881), both of which were enthusiastically received, down to our infants of 1925, which caused almost as much enthusiasm.

Dr. Louise Deal gave a short account of the formation of the club.

Dr. Eva C. Reid presented a "Constitution and By-Laws." This was read aloud twice and, while it was being discussed, Dr. Brown appointed a nominating committee, consisting of Doctors Walker, Flynn and Atkinson.

Upon return of this committee the following report was given: President, Louise B. Deal; Secretary-Treasurer, Edna Barney; Executive Committee—Eva C. Reid, Eileen Leonard, Mary Glover.

A vote was taken upon this ticket and carried. Dr. Brown, in a very gracious speech, installed Louise B. Deal as President.

The Constitution and By-Laws were then voted upon and accepted.

Dr. Bertola was called upon for a speech, the subject of which was the affiliation of the Women Physicians' Club of San Francisco with the State Federation of Women's Clubs. This was later discussed and unanimously carried. The President appointed Dr. Frieda Kruse, Chairman of a Committee on Music.

Those present were: Doctors Jennie Anderson, Arthurs, Ash, Atkinson, Barney, Bertola, Boerke, Boldemann, Botsford (detained), Bridgeman, Brown, Bruckman, Buckley, Byrne, Campbell, Crabtree, Culver, Davis, Damkroeger, Deal, Donovan, Duggan, Eaton, Feeley, Flynn, Gifford, Glover, Alice Goss, Gulbrandsen, Genung, Mary Harris, Holmslaw, Noble Haven, Jolius, Keys, Kruse, Lafontaine, Leonard, Loveless, McKellips, MacRae, Mahoney, Kuleav Maximova, Elizabeth Maximova, Merritt, Mentzer, Morris, Macomber, Maxwell, Piper, Pettis, Perillat, Reid, Rethwilm, Richter, Schulze, Selling, Shimkin, Siebe, Spriggs, Stadtmuller, Stark, Stevens, Strickler, Taber, Take, Torrey, Agnes Walker, Wanzer, Winslow, Wright, Willits, Wood, Goldman, Watkins (detained).

Unable to attend, but expressing a desire to join: Doctors Owen, Pope, Cornell, Trimmer, Scott, Beebe, Hewitt, Simon, Reghetti, Malpas, de la Hauteire, Lynn, Sanborn.